



Testimony of Sharon Palmer, President
AFT Connecticut

SB 927 An Act Concerning Requirements for Early Childhood Educators
SB 928 An Act Concerning Teacher Preparation

Higher Education and Employment Advancement Committee
February 17, 2011

Good morning Senator Bye, Representative Willis and members of the Committee. I am Sharon Palmer, President AFT Connecticut a diverse 28,000 member union which represents teachers, paraprofessionals, state employees, health care professionals, and higher education faculty and staff.

AFT Connecticut wishes to comment briefly on SB 927 and SB 928. Both bills involve teacher preparation for early childhood educators. We unequivocally support high standards. We would like to see educators in every class room who are certified and hold a 4 year degree. Others should have an associate's degree. While we would prefer this happen immediately we recognize the need for a phase in. As you might suspect we would like a shorter phase in period.

We have been on record for many years as opposing alternate routes to certification. That opposition continues. We do not believe the programs hold prospective teachers to a high enough standard and those who complete alternative routes to certification are not well prepared for the rigors of the classroom.

We hope you consider our positions in your deliberations and we would be happy to work with you on these bills.

Thank you.